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STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; US IMMIGRATION DEAL; WOLFOWITZ'S  
RESIGNATION FROM WORLD BANK; 05/18/07

#### 11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Major international stories today include the US deal to overhaul immigration legislation; and Paul Wolfowitz's resignation from the World Bank.

#### 12. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Key US immigration deal"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," penned (05/18) "As a result of the mutual need to solve this dilemma as soon as possible, US President George W. Bush and a bipartisan group of senators reached a first and controversial deal yesterday to reform the immigration system, which will have to overcome serious obstacles both at the US Senate and the Lower House.

"... The reform of the immigration system signifies a challenge and a decisive opportunity for George W. Bush.

"The riddle is whether he will be able to turn this long-standing US headache into perhaps the most important accomplishment of his second term in office. Otherwise, it will only be a hard slap on his face in his short remaining time in office.

"Bush has promoted worldwide immigration reform for years. He believes that the fact that millions of immigrants work many years for miserable salaries to improve the competitiveness and income of their employers is 'unfair.' However, he knows that a wide segment of Americans is against what could be seen as an amnesty.

"... Even so, immigration reform is a golden opportunity for the White House, which is increasingly overwhelmed by the occupation of Iraq. Bush could well give hurrahs if he obtains a measure of high political impact with a Congress under the control of Democrats."

- "The US reaches a deal to regularize the situation of immigrants"

Ana Baron, leading "Clarín's" Washington-based correspondent, comments (05/18) "Republican and Democratic senators, with the wink of the White House, reached a historic deal yesterday to launch the most important US immigration reform in 40 years..."

"... While the deal has significant support from the Senate, it is still unclear whether it could be passed by the Lower House, with its hard-line conservative legislators.

"Seeking what for some is the only positive legacy he can obtain in his two terms in office, Bush energetically supported the draft bill yesterday.

".. The deal reached is dangerous for Republicans bearing in mind that, they are already in the election campaign, and the base of the party in power is the group that most fiercely opposes legalization of illegal immigrants. In this regard, Bush has the merit of going against the tide."

- "Fragility"

Marcelo Cantelmi, international editor of leading "Clarín," opines (05/18) "It is a step forward, but it will hardly be a gigantic step. The deal shows a sign of realism. The US needs to legalize immigrants because they make up a crucial workforce, which will also generate taxes. The problem is that the path appears to be filled with obstacles, particularly for temporary workers..."

"The truth is that the North of the world faces a growing challenge on this issue... Illegal immigrants are not only a force crossing borders. They are a symbol of deliberately arranged fragile conditions of work, a distortion they did not create."

- "World Bank - one of Bush's 'hawks' is out"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nación," writes (05/18) "It is over. Last night, the controversial Paul Wolfowitz announced his resignation as President of the World Bank after trying for two months to resist the scandal that paralyzed his work during recent weeks, and negotiated an more elegant way out than what his European opponents wanted.

"Wolfowitz will leave June 30 and, he obtained a final gesture from the WB Board, which acknowledged that he acted 'on good faith'..."

"... His past as a Bush 'hawk' and author of the invasion of Iraq has always created domestic tension..."

"Wolfowitz went through a tortuous transition ever since he left the US Pentagon and joined the World Bank in 2005. His incorporation into the IMF's sister entity was interpreted in many capital cities of the world as another unilateral rebuff from US President George W. Bush to the international community.

"... His actions were soon interpreted as treating friendly countries differently from countries that are in disagreement with the White House... According to Manis Bapna, Executive Director of the Center for Information, a private institution controlling the Bank, 'Wolfowitz's style was thought of as a subjective tool to punish enemies and reward friends.' The White House sought to prevent his downfall until it turned out to be inevitable."

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